

ADRC Services

For People with Mental Illness and Substance Use Disorders

Aging and disability resource centers (ADRCs) help people with mental health or substance use disorders access a wide range of services, benefits and community supports. They are also an important resource for older people and people with disabilities who suffer from depression, alcohol abuse or other mental health disorders that often accompany loss of independence or ability, loss of family and friends, and the development of the need for long-term care. The following describes ADRC responsibilities relating to people with mental illness and/or substance use disorders.

In General

- ADRCs are required to serve all target populations, including people with mental illness and substance use disorders or their families, by the end of their first year of operation.
- Adults with mental illness or substance use disorders who are elderly or have a physical or developmental disability are eligible to receive the full range of services provided by the ADRC.
- Adults with mental illness or substance use disorders who do not also have age- or disability-related long term care need are eligible to receive information and assistance, assistance in accessing mental health or substance abuse services, disability benefits counseling and assistance in accessing emergency services, as described below.
- ADRCs are not expected to provide mental health or substance abuse services.
- An ADRC may choose to offer additional services for people with mental illness or substance use disorders, if they are provided by staff with the appropriate clinical expertise and funded from a source other than the ADRC contract from the Department of Health and Family Services.

Areas of Knowledge and Expertise

ADRC staff is expected to have the following knowledge and skills in order to effectively serve people with mental health and substance use disorders:

- Have general knowledge of the nature and characteristics of mental illness and substance use disorders. However, ADRC staff is not expected to become expert on the diagnosis or treatment of mental illness or substance abuse disorders.
- Be able to tell when a customer has mental health or substance abuse issues and know when a referral for services is appropriate.
- Be able to communicate effectively with people who are emotionally distressed, confused, disoriented, hopeless, angry or suicidal.
- Know what mental health and substance abuse providers and resources are available in the community and the procedures for accessing these resources.
- Be familiar with information resources relating to mental health and substance abuse issues on the internet.
- Be knowledgeable about consumer and advocacy organizations serving people with mental illness and substance use disorders at both the local and state levels.
- Be able to recognize and appropriately handle emergency situations involving mental health, alcohol or other drug related crises and to connect people to the appropriate providers of emergency services.

Required Services

ADRCs are required to make the following services available to adults with mental health or substance use disorders.

- **Information and Assistance**

- Provide information and assistance on a wide variety of topics – housing, employment, transportation, health care, legal services, etc – as well as information on mental health and substance abuse services.

- **Assistance in Accessing Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services**

- Maintain accurate and complete information about locally available mental health and substance abuse resources in the I&A database
- Help customers understand how the mental health and substance abuse systems work in their county
- Make referrals to and connect people with appropriate mental health and substance abuse programs and services

- **Disability Benefit Specialist Services**

- Provide the full range of Disability Benefit Specialist services, including information on how to access public and private benefit programs, help gathering financial and non-financial information needed for eligibility determination, and assistance in exercising client rights and filing appeals and grievances.

- **Emergency Response**

- Promptly connect people with 911, crisis intervention, and/or other emergency services when a situation involving immediate risk is identified.
- Have the capacity to connect the person directly to the emergency service provider, without requiring the caller to place a separate call.
- Answer after hours phone calls, at a minimum, with a message instructing callers about who to contact in case of emergency.
- ADRCs are neither expected nor required to be emergency service providers.

Optional Services

ADRCs may, but are not required to, make additional services available to people with mental health and substance use disorders. These could include options counseling, short term care management, or administration of the Functional Eligibility Screen for Mental Health and AODA. The expertise and additional capacity needed to provide these services must be funded from sources other than the ADRC contract from the Department.

Procedures for Accessing Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

ADRCs need to establish agreements with their county agencies and other mental health and substance abuse providers that describe what services are available, who is eligible to receive which services and how those services can be accessed. Copies of procedures and agreements relating to access to mental health and substance abuse services must be submitted to the Department in conjunction with the initial start-up of the ADRC, and any revisions are submitted with the ADRC's annual update.